

****ATTENTION****

The City Council meeting will be held in a hybrid format that may include both in-person AND virtual attendance via Zoom. Unless they have cause to appear virtually, Councilmembers will attend the meeting in person in Council Chambers, fifth floor of City Hall, 316 N. 26th Street. In order to honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know in Article II, Sections 8 and 9, of the Montana Constitution, the City of Billings and City Council are making every effort to meet the requirements of the open meeting laws.

Citizens are invited to:

- . Review the Agenda Packet on the City's website at: www.billingsmt.gov and click on "Your Government," "City Council," and "Agendas & Minutes".
- . View the meeting:
 - . On Community 7 TV - Channel 7 or Channel 507 -- Spectrum Cable. *(On evenings when there is a conflict with School District No. 2 Board meetings, the City Council meeting will be broadcast on Channel 8 - Spectrum Cable.)* Channel 7 or Channel 978 - TDS Fiber.
 - . Online at www.comm7tv.com and click on the "Watch Live" icon. Community 7 also has links to their Facebook page and YouTube channel.
 - . On the City's website at www.billingsmt.gov and click on "Watch Meetings Online" on the homepage.
 - . In-Person.

Citizens may submit public comment via the following methods:

- . Mail: City Clerk, P.O. Box 1178, Billings, MT 59103
- . Email: Council@billingsmt.gov
 - . Emails received after 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting, may be posted on the Council's webpage the following day for public viewing.
- . Attend the meeting in person

Please contact Denise Bohlman, City Clerk, at bohlmand@billingsmt.gov, or at 406.657.8210, with any questions.



VISION STATEMENT:
"The Magic City: A diverse,
welcoming community
where people prosper and
business succeeds."

SPECIAL WORK SESSION AGENDA

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
316 N. 26th Street, 5th Floor

MARCH 12, 2026

12:00 Noon

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Nelson

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ALL ITEMS. This is the time to comment on any matter (Agenda or Non-Agenda) falling within the scope of the Billings City Council. There will also be time in conjunction with each agenda item for public comment relating to that item. You may only speak once for each item during the meeting.

Please note, the City Council cannot take action on any item of significant interest to the public that does not appear on the agenda. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes during each public comment period or as set by the Mayor. **Speaker sign-in required.** Please sign the roster at the back of Council Chambers.

AGENDA:

1. Montana Land Use Planning Act/Billings 2045 Update.

PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-AGENDA ITEMS". Speaker Sign-in required. *(Restricted to ONLY items not on this printed agenda. Comments are limited to 3 minutes. Please sign the roster located at the back of Council chambers.)*

ADJOURN:

Note:

- This meeting is an "informal" meeting of the City Council. The content of the Agenda is subject to change at the meeting.
- In the event there is a Closed Executive Session, the sole purpose is to discuss litigation strategy. The other parties to the case(s) discussed are not public bodies or associations as described in Section 2-3-203(1) and (2), MCA. The meeting is closed, as allowed by Section 2-3-203(4) (a), MCA, "to discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position" of the City of Billings.

City Council Special Session

Meeting Date: 03/12/2026
TITLE: Montana Land Use Planning Act/Billings 2045 Update
PRESENTED BY: Anna Vickers, Planning Division Manager
Department: Planning & Community Services
Presentation: Yes
Legal Review: No
Project Number: N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council receive this informational update on the implementation of the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MCA Title 76, Chapter 25) through Billings 2045. No formal action is requested at this time. Staff is seeking general direction and feedback from City Council to ensure alignment between Council and the Interim Planning Commission (IPC) on specific elements as the process moves forward. This afternoon's focus will be on the Encouragement of Development of Housing in MCA 76-25-302.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This work session provides City Council with an update on the City's implementation of the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) and development of the Billings 2045 Land Use Plan. MLUPA requires qualifying municipalities, including Billings, to adopt a Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map to guide long-term growth and development. Staff will provide an overview of the Act, summarize outreach efforts conducted to date, and share key themes emerging from community input. In addition, staff will review the statutory requirement under MCA 76-25-302 to adopt at least five strategies to encourage the development of housing and will seek general direction from Council regarding those strategies.

No formal action is requested at this time. The purpose of this discussion is to ensure communication and alignment between City Council and the Interim Planning Commission as Billings 2045 moves forward.

BACKGROUND (Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies, if applicable)

In 2023, the Montana State Legislature passed Senate Bill 382, the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA), codified in Title 76, Chapter 25 of the Montana Code Annotated. The intent of the Act is to provide a comprehensive land use planning system that promotes the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Montana. The Act outlines that a municipality with a population at or exceeding 5,000 located within a county with a population at or exceeding 70,000 in the most recent decennial census shall comply with the provisions. The Montana Land Use Planning Act mandates that municipalities develop and implement a Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map (Billings 2045) to guide future development. Billings 2045 will serve as a comprehensive plan that addresses land use, economic development, housing, public services, and natural resources.

Staff will review the following items with City Council:

- An overview of the Montana Land Use Planning Act and its implementation requirements;
- An update on outreach efforts conducted throughout the community to date;
- A summary of key themes and feedback received through those outreach efforts;
- A review of the statutory criteria for encouraging the development of housing pursuant to MCA 76-25-302, which requires the selection of at least five strategies to support housing within the City of Billings; and
- Discussion and general direction from City Council regarding these housing strategies to ensure Billings 2045 aligns with Council expectations as the process moves forward.

FISCAL EFFECTS

There are no fiscal impacts associated with this item at this time. This work session is informational only and does not involve budgetary commitments.

STAKEHOLDERS

The implementation of the Montana Land Use Planning Act and Billings 2045 affects all residents of the City of Billings.

ALTERNATIVES

No formal alternatives are presented, as no action is being requested of the City Council. This item is intended to

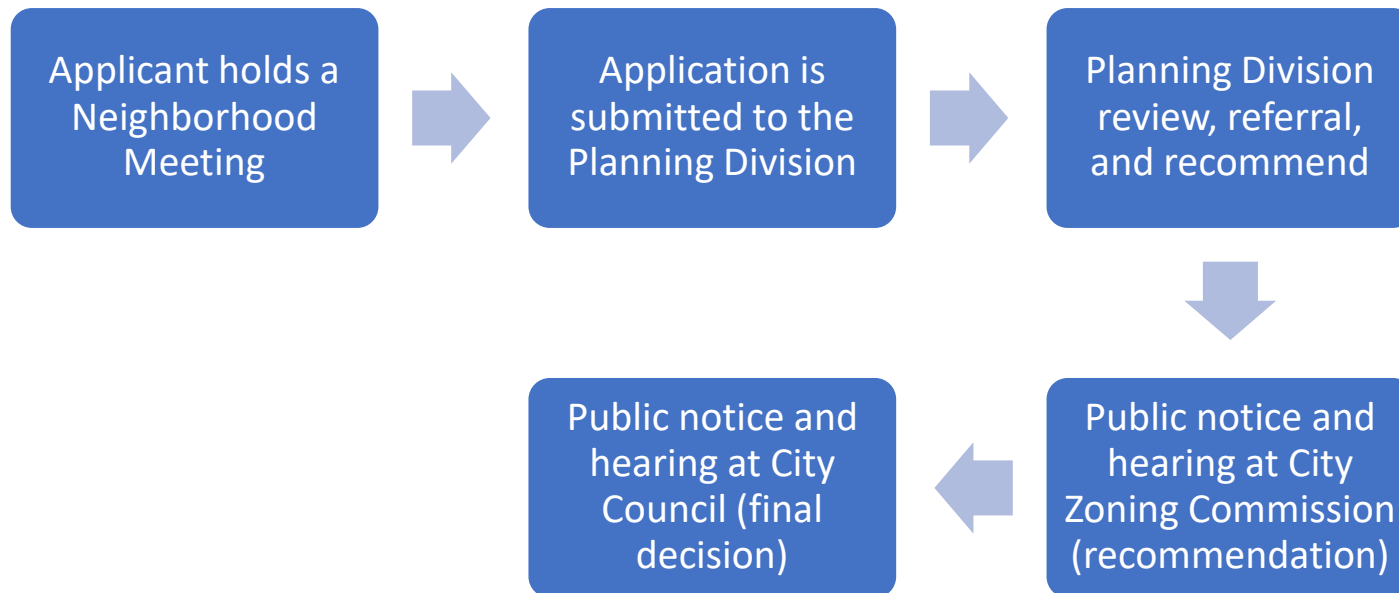
provide an update and receive general feedback and direction from Council to ensure consistency with the Interim Planning Commission as implementation of the Montana Land Use Planning Act and Billings 2045 continues.

Presentation
Zoning Incentives Spreadsheet

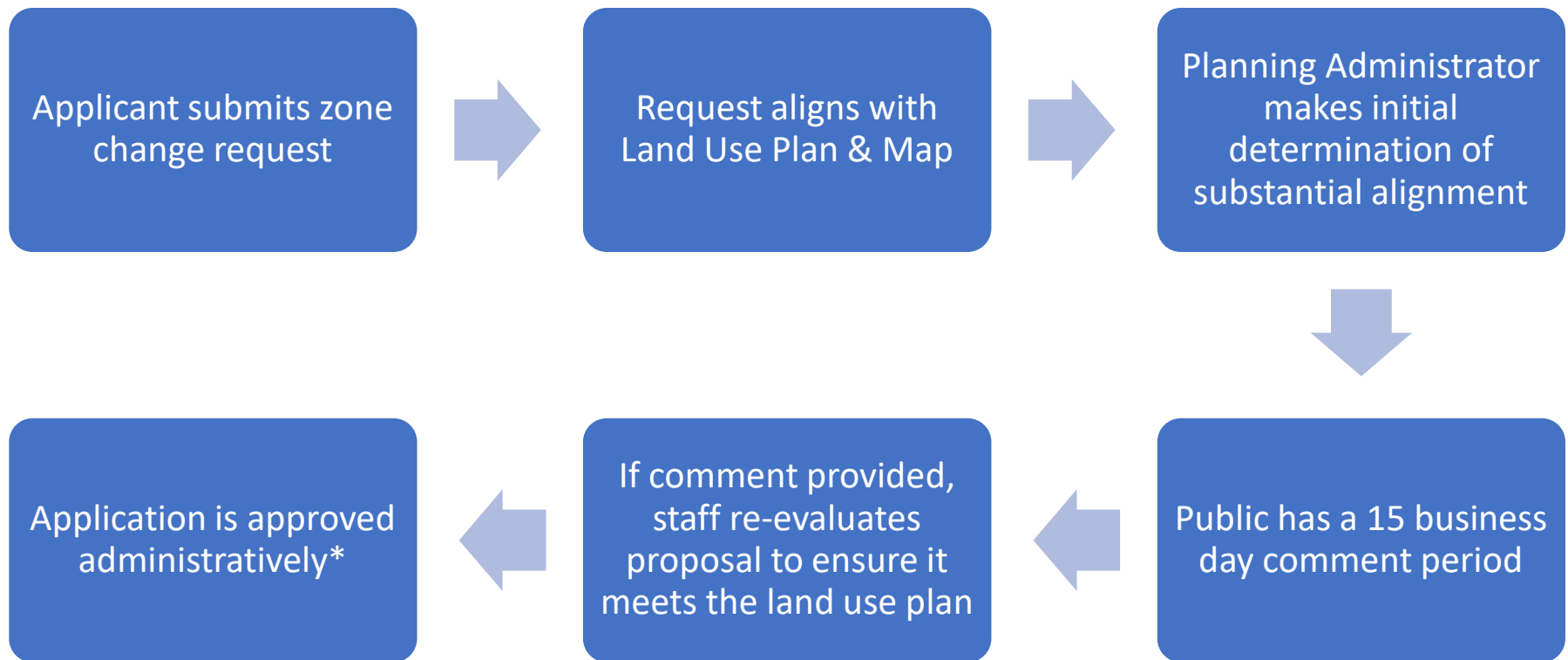
2023 Montana Land Use Planning Act

- Growth Policy – Billings 2045
 - Housing
 - Local services and facilities
 - Economic Development
 - Natural resources, environment, and hazards
- Subdivision regulations – updates following adoption of plan
- Zoning regulations – updates following adoption of plan
- **Administrative Review of Most Land Use Applications after Billings 2045 Adoption**

Zoning Applications Current Process



Zoning Process under MLUPA



* Appeal Process is Available

PROJECT TIMELINE



MCA76-25-302 Encouragement of development housing (Must include five)

	IPC Recommendation	Council Direction
(a) Allow as a permitted use for at least a duplex where a single-unit dwelling is permitted	Already required - 2023 SB323	
(b) Zone for higher density housing near transit stations, places of employment, higher education facilities, and other appropriate population centers, as determined by the local government.	Create an overlay in appropriate areas throughout the city	
(c) Eliminate or reduce off-street parking requirements to require no more than one parking space per dwelling unit.	Will be implemented – 2025 HB492	

	IPC Recommendation	Council Direction
(d) Eliminate impact fees for accessory dwelling units or developments that include multi-unit dwellings or reduce the fees by at least 25%.	Navigate when reviewing incentives within the Infill Policy winter 2026/spring 2027	
(e) Allow, as a permitted use, for at least one internal or detached accessory dwelling unit on a lot with a single-unit dwelling occupied as a primary residence.	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(f) Allow for single-room occupancy developments.	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(g) Allow, as a permitted use, a triplex or fourplex where a single-unit dwelling is permitted.	Navigate when reviewing incentives within the Infill Policy winter 2026/spring 2027	
(h) Eliminate minimum lot sizes or reduce the existing minimum lot size required by at least 25%.	Do not implement	

	IPC Recommendation	Council Direction
(i) Eliminate aesthetic, material, shape, bulk, size, floor area, and other massing requirements for multi-unit dwellings or mixed-use developments or remove at least half of those requirements.	Do not implement	
(j) Provide for zoning that specifically allows or encourages the development of tiny houses, as defined in Appendix Q of the International Residential Code as it was printed on January 1, 2023.	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(k) Eliminate setback requirements or reduce existing setback requirements by at least 25%.	Do not implement	
(l) Increase building height limits for dwelling units by at least 25%.	Do not implement	

	IPC Recommendation	Council Direction
(m) Allow multi-unit dwellings or mixed-use development as a permitted use on all lots where office, retail, or commercial are primary permitted uses.	Already required - 2023 SB245	
(n) Allow multi-unit dwellings as a permitted use on all lots where triplexes or fourplexes are permitted uses.	Still exploring	

Further Questions, Discussion and Direction

MCA 76-25-302 Encouragement of development of housing.

(1) The zoning regulations authorized in 76-25-301 must include a minimum of five of the following housing strategies, applicable to the majority of the area, where residential development is permitted in the jurisdictional area:

Requirement	Discussion with IPC	Council Direction
(a) Allow, as a permitted use, for at least a duplex where a single-unit dwelling is permitted	Already required - 2023 SB323	N/A
(b) Zone for higher density housing near transit stations, places of employment, higher education facilities, and other appropriate population centers, as determined by the local government	Create an overlay in appropriate areas throughout the city	
(c) Eliminate or reduce off-street parking requirements to require no more than one parking space per dwelling unit	Will be implemented - 2025 HB 492	N/A
(d) Eliminate impact fees for accessory dwelling units or developments that include multi-unit dwellings or reduce the fees by at least 25%	Navigate when reviewing incentives within the Infill Policy, winter 2026/spring 2027	
(e) Allow, as a permitted use, for at least one internal or detached accessory dwelling unit on a lot with a single-unit dwelling occupied as a primary residence	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(f) Allow for single-room occupancy developments	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(g) Allow, as a permitted use, a triplex or fourplex where a single-unit dwelling is permitted	Navigate when reviewing incentives within the Infill Policy, winter 2026/spring 2027	
(h) Eliminate minimum lot sizes or reduce the existing minimum lot size required by at least 25%	Do not implement	
(i) Eliminate aesthetic, material, shape, bulk, size, floor area, and other massing requirements for multi-unit dwellings or mixed-use developments or remove at least half of those requirements	Do not implement	
(j) Provide for zoning that specifically allows or encourages the development of tiny houses, as defined in Appendix Q of the International Residential Code as it was printed on January 1, 2023	Already allowed within the zoning code	
(k) Eliminate setback requirements or reduce existing setback requirements by at least 25%	Do not implement	
(l) Increase building height limits for dwelling units by at least 25%	Do not implement	
(m) Allow multi-unit dwellings or mixed-use development as a permitted use on all lots where office, retail, or commercial are primary permitted uses	Already required - 2023 SB245	N/A
(n) Allow multi-unit dwellings as a permitted use on all lots where triplexes or fourplexes are permitted uses	Still exploring	

**Indicates strategies already required/implemented*